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Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia

I. Introduction

1. In its presidential statement of 31 October 2001 (S/PRST/2001/30), the Security Council requested me to submit reports, at least every four months, on the situation in Somalia and the efforts to promote the peace process.

2. The present report covers developments since my previous report, dated 13 October 2003 (S/2003/987). Its main focus is the challenges faced and the progress made by the Somali national reconciliation process, which has been ongoing in Kenya since October 2002 under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), with support from the international community. The report also provides an update on the political and security situation in Somalia and the humanitarian and development activities of United Nations programmes and agencies in the country.

II. Somali national reconciliation process

3. By mid-September 2003, developments at the Somalia National Reconciliation Conference at Mbagathi, Kenya, led to an impasse over the contested adoption of a charter (see S/2003/987, paras. 13-18). Some of the leaders, including the President of the Transitional National Government, Abdikassim Salad Hassan, Colonel Barre Aden Shire of the Juba Valley Alliance (JVA), Mohamed Ibrahim Habsade of the Rahanwein Resistance Army (RRA), Osman Hassan Ali ("Atto") and Musse Sudi ("Yalahow") rejected the adoption, and returned to Somalia. On 30 September, a group of them announced the formation of the National Salvation Council consisting of 12 factions under the chairmanship of Musse Sudi. On 7 October, the National Salvation Council signed a memorandum of understanding with the President of the Transitional National Government, in which it acknowledged the continuance in office of the Transitional National Government. The signatories also announced their intention to convene a new national reconciliation conference separate from the one at Mbagathi. No parallel conference has been held, however.

4. At the tenth IGAD Summit, held at Kampala on 24 October under the chairmanship of the President of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni, the heads of State focused attention on ways and means to get the Somali national reconciliation process back on track. The President of Mozambique, Joachim Chissano, Chairman of the African Union, and Alpha Konaré, Chairperson of the Commission of the

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African Union, also participated in the Summit. My Special Adviser, Mohamed Sahnoun, accompanied by my Representative for Somalia, Winston Tubman, collaborated actively with IGAD leaders in efforts to re-energize the stalled reconciliation process.

5. The IGAD heads of State decided to expand the membership of the IGAD Technical Committee to include Eritrea, the Sudan and Uganda, in addition to Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya, and renamed it the IGAD Facilitation Committee. The Special Envoy of the African Union for Somalia was made a member of the Facilitation Committee. The Summit directed the Facilitation Committee to meet in Nairobi at the ministerial level on 28 October to review the status of the Somali national reconciliation process.

6. The ministerial meeting, chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kenya, was held in Nairobi as scheduled and was attended by ministers from Djibouti, Eritrea and Uganda as well as Ethiopian officials. The ministers agreed that Somali leaders would be invited to a Leaders' Consultation in Kenya on 20 November and that phase III of the Conference would commence only after the successful conclusion of the Leaders' Consultation.

7. The Transitional National Government and the National Salvation Council raised several objections to the proposed Leaders' Consultation. The main objection centred on the issue of representation. The group of leaders who had endorsed the adoption of a charter in mid-September wanted the Consultation to be held as scheduled and the participants limited to Abdikassim Salad Hassan and those leaders who had signed the Eldoret Declaration (S/2002/1359, annex) on 27 October 2002. On the other hand, the Transitional National Government and National Salvation Council groups wanted a larger representation of leaders and the exclusion of the former Prime Minister of the Transitional National Government and the Speaker of Transitional National Assembly (see S/2003/987, para. 9). In addition, both groups called for the postponement of the Leaders' Consultation to observe the final days of Ramadan.

8. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kenya, accompanied by the Kenyan Special Envoy for Somalia and Chairman of the Conference, Bethuel Kiplagat, held talks with officials in Djibouti, Ethiopia and Saudi Arabia in November to seek support for the Somali national reconciliation process.

9. The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Kieran Prendergast, visited eastern regions and the Horn of Africa from 7 to 16 November. Following in-depth briefings by my Special Adviser and my Representative for Somalia, he held discussions with a wide spectrum of Somali leaders, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kenya, Mr. Kiplagat, and members of the IGAD Facilitation Committee, the Executive Committee of the Somalia Aid Coordination Body, the United Nations country team for Somalia and other external actors to assess the current status and prospects for national reconciliation in Somalia, as well as planning for a future United Nations role in the country.

10. At its second meeting on 8 December, the Facilitation Committee was obliged once again to postpone the Leaders' Consultation until 18 December. In a joint communiqué, the Ministers stressed that any invited Somali leader who did not attend the meeting "shall be deemed not to be interested in the reconciliation process and will be treated as such". In view of the continuing impasse, the Minister for

Foreign Affairs of Kenya, after consultations with President Museveni, had to postpone the Leaders' Consultation for a third time, until 9 January 2004.

11. International observers at the Conference, including my Representative, engaged with all Somali stakeholders, in groups as well as individually, in efforts to reconcile divergent positions. On 4 December, the Special Envoy of the African Union led a delegation that included Kenyan, Ugandan, Swedish and United Kingdom representatives to meet with representatives of the Transitional National Government and the National Salvation Council in Mogadishu in order to persuade them to participate in the Leaders' Consultation in Nairobi. Likewise, on 12 December, international observers held a meeting with Somali leaders of opposing views in Nairobi and urged them to adopt a cooperative attitude that would ensure the participation of all Somali leaders in the Leaders' Consultation.

12. After discussions with Somali leaders in Nairobi on 8 and 9 January, President Museveni and the President of Kenya, Mwai Kibaki, launched the Somali Leaders' Consultation in Nairobi on 9 January. The former appealed to Somali leaders to reach the necessary compromises and agreement on a permanent peace in the country, the formation of a national army, the restoration of Somali sovereignty and the recovery of the economy.

13. On 29 January, the Somali leaders signed a document entitled "Declaration on the Harmonization of Various Issues Proposed by the Somali Delegates at the Somali Consultative Meetings from 9 to 29 January 2004". The document consisted of proposed amendments to the transitional federal charter adopted at the plenary meeting of the Conference on 15 September 2003. The leaders decided that the name of the charter would be transitional federal charter of the Somali republic; the name of the government would be transitional federal government; its term would last five years; and that the transitional federal parliament would consist of 275 members, 12 per cent of whom would be women. In addition, the document called for a national census to be undertaken while a new constitution was being drafted, as well as for its approval by an internationally supervised national referendum. A controversy subsequently arose, however, over the method of selection of the members of parliament, and efforts are being made to overcome the problem.

14. Regarding the financing of the Conference, the IGAD facilitation announced a severe financial crisis and renewed its appeal to donors for additional funding in December. The facilitation estimated that costs for the Conference from February 2003 to January 2004 would amount to €11 million. While donors are reported to have pledged €5 million, the Conference was considered to be carrying a deficit of €5.9 million (54 per cent) by December 2003.

15. It is noteworthy that the budget of the Conference had supported the expenses of approximately 800 Somalis at Mbagathi until November 2003. In view of the impasse in the proceedings and the precarious financial situation, the IGAD facilitation began a vigorous repatriation of many of the Somalis, with the exception of the 366 accredited delegates for phase II of the Conference and 45 Somali elders.

16. Meanwhile, Italy announced a further contribution of $500,000. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Sweden and the League of Arab States contributed $100,000, $50,000 and $75,000 respectively. The European Commission remains the major contributor to the Conference.

17. On 19 October, Sheikh Ibrahim Ali, a delegate at the Conference, his driver and another person were found murdered in the Ngong forest in Nairobi. Another delegate, Ahmed Rashid Sheik Mohamed, a Somali Canadian, was found dead in Mbagathi on 6 November. While the death of the latter is considered to be from natural causes, the Kenyan authorities are conducting an investigation into the first incident.

III. Developments inside Somalia

18. Subsequent to the removal of Hassan Abshir Farah and Abdalla Deerow Issak as Prime Minister and Speaker of the Transitional National Assembly, respectively (see S/2003/987, para. 9), Mustafa Gududow was elected as the new Speaker on 4 December. Abdikassim Salad Hassan appointed Mohamed Abdi Yussuf as the new Prime Minister of the Transitional National Government on 8 December. The latter has since appointed a cabinet of 37 ministers.

19. Abdikassim Salad Hassan and members of the National Salvation Council held talks with officials in Djibouti, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Saudi Arabia and Yemen from 13 to19 November, reportedly to seek political and financial support for the holding of a reconciliation conference in Somalia. Reports also indicate that the Presidents of Djibouti and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya encouraged the Somali leaders to return to the IGAD-led Somali national reconciliation process.

20. Abdikassim Salad Hassan participated in the Organization of Islamic Conference Summit, held in Kuala Lumpur from 16 to 18 October. He also attended the tenth Summit of the IGAD heads of State held in Kampala on 24 October.

21. On 21 December, the "Somaliland" Parliament adopted a resolution, asserting "Somaliland's" authority over the Sool and Sanaag regions, which are also claimed by "Puntland". In a letter dated 22 December, addressed to the United Nations Political Office for Somalia, the "Puntland" administration stated that it would not fail to use all means at its disposal to defend the security and territorial integrity of "Puntland". On 27 December, forces loyal to the "Puntland" administration assumed control of Las-Anod district in Sool region. "Somaliland" considers its borders to be those of the former British Somaliland Protectorate, which included the two regions. "Puntland's" claim is based on the fact that the clans living in those regions are mostly Darod, the dominant group in "Puntland".

22. In view of the escalation of tension between the two administrations, the Kenyan Foreign Minister issued a statement on 19 January 2004 on behalf of the IGAD Facilitation Committee, calling on both parties to exercise maximum restraint.

23. I also called on the parties to refrain from the use of force. I urged them to seek a solution through political dialogue and reminded them of their responsibility to protect the civilian population and ensure unimpeded access for humanitarian assistance in their respective areas. I reiterated my call to all Somali parties to reach agreement on national reconciliation that would put an end to the fighting and bloodshed in the country.

IV. Security

24. During the period under review, breaches in security in "Somaliland", an area hitherto enjoying relative peace, have caused serious concern. On 5 October, Dr. Annalena Tonelli, an Italian, was shot dead at close range on the grounds of a tuberculosis treatment centre that she had founded in Boorama. Earlier, she had dedicated several years to medical work in Marka and the Lower Shabelle region. On 20 October, Richard and Enid Eyeington, a couple from the United Kingdom, who had been teaching at Sheikh Secondary School as employees of the non-governmental organization SOS Kinderdorf, were murdered in their home in Sheikh. Investigations by the "Somaliland" authorities are ongoing regarding both incidents. On 2 November, staff of an international non-governmental organization received a letter threatening them with violence, forcing the organization to remove international staff from Hargeysa.

25. On 9 December, the commander of the Hargeysa police traffic division was murdered outside his home. The motive for the attack was reportedly related to the officer's role in the investigation of a traffic accident in which one of his clansmen had been involved.

26. There has been sporadic inter-clan fighting between Murusade and Duduble in El-Bur district of Galguduud and between members of the Dir and the Marehan in the Heraale area of the Mudug region. On 27 October, a man from the Dir clan reportedly killed a Marehan clan member in revenge for the killing of his father in 1992. This murder degenerated into inter-clan fighting in Heraale village, in Abudwaaq district. The clashes have continued intermittently and have transformed the dispute into a fight for the control of grazing lands and water in Heraale.

27. In Mogadishu, crime remains a major problem and the threat of kidnapping and direct attacks on United Nations and other humanitarian workers remains high. The city has often been tense because clans controlling different parts of the city are loyal to rival groups involved in the Somali national reconciliation process. Tensions in the reconciliation process have occasionally led to conflict in the city, although these have not escalated into major confrontations.

28. Tensions between Mohamed Dhere and Musse Sudi, both from different sub-clans of the Hawiye/Abgal, have continued. On 22 December, Mohamed Dhere's militia attacked a convoy carrying Musse Sudi and other prominent Abgal politicians in north Mogadishu because it was travelling without permission through an area under the control of his sub-clan.

29. Early in November, the arrival of some 15 "technicals" from Mogadishu to areas near Marka in Lower Shabelle signalled rising tensions over competition to extort taxes from banana traders. On 14 November, the fighting pitted the Ayr against the Saad, both sub-clans of the Hawiye/Habr-Gedir. Many people were killed and wounded before a ceasefire was arranged by elders on 27 November. The fighting placed the lives of non-governmental organization staff in Marka at risk, especially when an airstrip that had been declared unsafe had to be used for their evacuation.

30. The intra-clan fighting that resulted from political differences among three leaders of RRA has continued in and around Baidoa. Two of them, Colonel Hassan Mohamed Nur "Shatigudud" and one of his former deputies, Sheik Aden Mohamed

Nur "Madobe", agreed to a ceasefire in September 2003. However, the situation worsened when, on 18 October, eight women were sprayed with bullets and killed as they fetched water at a water hole in the Gofmarere area of Bay region. Some 300 Rahanwein elders have assembled in Wajid with a view to holding reconciliation talks. Since the reconciliation efforts started, the clashes have diminished in intensity in the Bay and Bakool regions.

31. Although Gedo region has been generally quiet, no clear authority has emerged and many of the clans are embroiled in disputes, resulting in occasional killings. El-Wak has been under the joint administration of the Garre and Marehan clans. In December, Garre militia wrested control of El-Wak from the Marehan. This conflict, together with the lack of any clear authority in the region, makes access by humanitarian agencies difficult.

32. Further south, in the Lower Juba region, JVA is reportedly holding a Republic of Korea fishing boat and its crew in Kismaayo port, apparently for failing to pay fishing dues. The crew includes nationals of Kenya, Indonesia and the Republic of Korea. The ship was apparently detained in June, first off the coast and then in Kismaayo port. JVA, which controls Kismaayo, has in turn been challenged by militias in Jilib who regularly set up checkpoints to extort money from travellers on the Kismaayo-Mogadishu road. Humanitarian operations in Kismaayo have been interrupted by numerous incidents of banditry and occasional fighting.

33. There have also been a number of violent incidents in other parts of the Lower Juba region. In Mararey, gunmen demanding money held up an aircraft leased by the European Commission Humanitarian Organisation (ECHO) on 12 November. The incident was resolved following the intervention of local clan elders. On 28 December, gunmen raided the offices of a local non-governmental organization in Mararey, leaving four men dead (one international staff member, two national staff and one visitor) and two more wounded.

V. Humanitarian situation

34. The confidence of the international humanitarian community was severely shaken by the murder of the three humanitarian workers in "Somaliland" (see para. 24). Travel restrictions for staff have been put in place and most humanitarian activities have been reduced. Until investigations by the authorities reveal more information, United Nations international staff are restricted to Hargeysa as a precautionary measure, where the authorities are providing security for United Nations facilities.

35. In September, the "Somaliland" administration issued a directive for the deportation of "illegal immigrants" in areas under its control. Internally displaced persons from southern Somalia are also classified as illegal immigrants. Although the "Ministry of the Interior" is registering internally displaced persons who want to return to their areas of origin, the deadline has now passed without any obvious expulsions. The United Nations has registered its concern with the authorities and has stressed that the forced expulsion of asylum-seekers would be in contravention of international law.

36. Four years of drought in northern Somalia have created an acute humanitarian crisis in the northern Sool plateau, while poor rainfall in the surrounding areas could expand the affected area to the northern and central regions of Togdheer and Mudug.

37. As a result of the failure of the *deyr* season rains (September-October) in the Sool, Sanaag and Bari regions, more than 90,000 pastoralists are facing serious food shortages and the loss of livestock, pasture and food. A joint United Nations/non-governmental organization assessment of the affected area in October found that roughly 60 per cent of livestock, especially camels, had been decimated by starvation and disease, further impoverishing pastoralist families who are heavily dependent on the sale of animals and milk for income. The remaining livestock is in too poor a condition to be sold. About 3,000 families have already abandoned their livestock to move to areas with permanent water sources and to a lesser extent to urban centres, such as Las-Anod and Garoowe.

38. United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and local authorities have responded by providing limited health services, distributing targeted family rations, subsidizing water distribution, rehabilitating existing water sources, and providing emergency cash grants. Interventions to support the remaining livestock and longer-term livelihood support programmes (mainly cash-for-work) are currently being planned.

39. Assurances of safe access to the contested areas of the Sool and Sanaag regions by both the "Somaliland" and "Puntland" administrations have so far been respected. However, heightened tension over Las-Anod (see paras. 21-23) is already causing delays and could further undermine the humanitarian response, should the situation worsen. The United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator is taking steps to bring the two administrations together in an effort to ensure that open conflict is averted and humanitarian access is maintained. Should armed conflict occur or drought conditions widen, additional urgent donor support may be required.

40. Intense inter-clan fighting in the central region of Galguduud, in Abudwaaq and Murusade districts (see para. 26), forced some 9,000 people to flee to surrounding towns whose inhabitants are themselves suffering from food insecurity because of drought conditions. The tense security situation continues to prevent adequate interventions. So far, the International Committee of the Red Cross has provided limited health support and non-food items. UNICEF is exploring the possibility of working through local partners to provide assistance. The United Nations and non-governmental organizations continue to monitor the situation with the aim of expanding humanitarian assistance once the security situation improves.

41. In southern Somalia, where livelihoods revolve around farming and agro-pastoralism, relatively good rains, ranging from 80 to 120 per cent of normal, are likely to maintain good crop and livestock production. Violence and armed conflict throughout much of southern and central Somalia continue to hamper access and humanitarian programming, however. During the current reporting period, localized conflict and the attempts of freelance militia to control airport revenues led to the temporary closure of airstrips in the villages and towns of Afmadow, Mararey, Jamaame, Kismaayo and Beledweyne, as well as at the K-50 airstrip outside Mogadishu. Despite the humanitarian needs in Mogadishu, ongoing criminality and violence continue to restrict access and humanitarian activities.

42. In recent weeks, the tenuous ceasefire between RRA factions (see para. 30) allowed humanitarian access to more than 2,000 internally displaced persons who had fled to the villages of Bakaar Yar and Bakaar Weyn in Wajid district to escape the fighting. They are living in camps with little access to basic social services. United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations are currently addressing their needs. They are also exploring ways to support the ongoing reconciliation efforts to ensure that access to these internally displaced persons is sustained.

43. As at 1 February 2004, less than 1 per cent of the $113 million requested in the 2004 Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Somalia has been received. Of the $78 million requested in the 2003 appeal, 61 per cent was funded by donors.

VI. Operational activities in support of peace

44. The World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme announced the launching of the Socio-Economic Survey on Somalia on 14 January 2004 in Nairobi. The two organizations are jointly implementing a programme to set up data collection systems, strengthen Somali statistical institutions and support the establishment of a statistical database to monitor macroeconomic and socio-economic conditions. It is being implemented with the support and participation of regional and local administrations and international partners. The Survey compiles baseline demographic and socio-economic data at the household level to address some of the critical needs and gaps in the social and economic sectors and for better policy formulation and planning. It will cover the areas of (a) demographics and housing; (b) employment and income; (c) basic services; (d) communication; (e) participation of women; and (f) environmental concerns.

45. The United Nations is assisting local authorities in "Somaliland" to improve the administration of justice by supporting the establishment of the rule of law, local capacity-building for law enforcement agencies and improving the application of human rights standards. The training session for members of the judiciary, which began in the last reporting period (see S/2003/987, para. 50), was completed on 21 November and provided training for 50 legal professionals in substantive law and procedure fundamental to the functioning of the judiciary. An evaluation of the training has been undertaken with the purpose of further developing the curriculum in time for the second phase of training.

46. During the current reporting period, the United Nations supported and assisted the establishment of a functional police headquarters at Hargeysa, the graduation of 130 cadets from the Mandera Police Academy, the training of judiciary and the establishment of a legal clinic at Hargeysa University.

47. The United Nations has begun the distribution of a comprehensive countrywide child protection study that was completed during the last reporting period (see S/2003/987, para. 56). The study was based on interviews with 10,000 children and adults across Somalia. Some of the study's most salient findings were that one in 20 children interviewed had been involved or had siblings involved in militia activity, mainly in the urban areas. The data revealed that extended families made little distinction between natural and adopted children. However, adopted girls are often not sent to school and married young. Street children are exposed to violence and drug abuse in urban centres. Over 8 per cent of families reported

children with developmental problems, one third of them as a consequence of trauma. All statistics were significantly higher for children and families in settlement camps for internally displaced persons.

48. The findings of the study will enable agencies to establish a clear knowledge base on the main areas of concern regarding the protection of vulnerable children in Somalia. The participatory data collection process and analysis of results also allowed agencies to build partnerships at the community level with principal child protection stakeholders. The United Nations will undertake advocacy and awareness-raising efforts on sensitive issues such as sexual violence and abuse, the protection of internally displaced children, the recruitment of child soldiers and the protection of children without primary caregivers. During the reporting period, all parties to the conflict in Somalia continued to recruit children into their forces, as outlined in my report on children and armed conflict (S/2003/1053).

49. A new UNICEF initiative being undertaken is helping youth to maximize their leadership and organizational skills. The project focuses on youth broadcasting as a way of empowering young people in the use of electronic media for community education and mobilization. During 2003, 20 youth groups with a total of 400 members were trained in techniques for producing and broadcasting radio programmes and videos. The pilot phase of the initiative was completed in December and more than 12 radio programmes and 20 videos were produced. This project has proved very successful in tapping the potential of a cadre of young Somalis who have a keen interest in pursuing peace-building and peace-fostering activities within their communities.

50. The outcome of a United Nations study on the multiple parallel legal systems, which are inherently discriminatory against women and inhibit women's access to justice, has deepened analysis and knowledge of the subject (see S/2003/987, paras. 59-60). The United Nations carried out capacity-building for nine women's organizations in Garoowe, Hargeysa and Mogadishu so as to enhance their ability to engage with and lobby law enforcement agencies on women's rights.

51. During October 2003, 205 Somalis were repatriated from Ethiopia to "Somaliland". In addition, 19 Somali refugees were repatriated from various other countries.

52. Remittances to Somalia provide approximately $1 billion of foreign income annually. The United Nations organized a conference in London on 3 and 4 December, which involved financial sector regulators from Europe and the United States of America and representatives from Somali remittance companies. The conference resulted in the establishment of the Somali Financial Services Association, a regulatory body which aims to fill the void in regulation caused by the limited mandate of central government, thus improving the credibility of the Somali remittance sector with foreign Governments.

53. The groundwork is being laid for the establishment of a Somali livestock export health certification system. The United Nations has recently established a project to systematically support this process, in recognition of the importance of the sector to Somali livelihoods.

54. No cases of polio were reported in Somalia at the end of 2003, thanks mainly to the joint efforts of the United Nations and partner agencies. The concerted implementation of national and subnational immunization days and cross-border

activities has increased coverage to more than 97 per cent, or nearly 1.4 million children per round, bringing Somalia closer to total eradication of the disease. In conjunction with the immunization days, nearly 1 million children received vitamin A capsules during the year.

55. Health agencies and local authorities have collaborated on improving the quality and sustainability of health facilities, health service delivery and more accountable health management systems in areas of relative stability. Technical support was provided to local authorities for the management of health-care systems and the development of sectoral policies. Through support from UNICEF, the World Health Organization and other partners, essential drugs and medical equipment were provided in over 400 health facilities, together with the training of medical staff in supervision and monitoring.

56. During the reporting period, the United Nations began work on the establishment of an HIV/AIDS sentinel surveillance system, combined with prevalence and validation studies on sexually transmitted infections, with the objective of establishing baseline data on HIV/AIDS. The United Nations facilitated training of HIV/AIDS counsellors in Boorama and facilitated access to appropriate medical, prevention and support services specifically targeting women.

57. During 2003, concerted and coordinated efforts among all stakeholders yielded a joint framework outlining HIV/AIDS issues in the country and presented clear strategies to prevent its spread. In the last quarter of the year, action plans for all administrative areas were finalized covering "Somaliland", "Puntland" and central/southern Somalia, using the framework as a foundation. The United Nations was able to establish key partnerships and networks that are expected to act as a springboard for future interventions.

VII. Observations

58. The agreement reached on amending the transitional charter at the Somali Leaders' Consultation in Nairobi marked a breakthrough that promises to allow further progress at the Somalia National Reconciliation Conference, which has been stalled for some time. It is my hope that the Somali leaders will continue to build on the progress made towards the establishment of an inclusive government in Somalia.

59. The next and final phase of the reconciliation process will involve the selection of members of the transitional national parliament, and they in turn are to elect the president who will lead the country during the transitional period. As the Somali leaders pursue political agreement at the Conference, I wish to point out how important it is that progress in the political arena be accompanied by serious efforts on their part to realize tangible improvement in the security situation on the ground, which would be conducive to the implementation of a political agreement. That would, in turn, accord the necessary credibility to the political agreement, which would be critical if such an agreement were to receive the full support of the people of Somalia and the international community.

60. The IGAD heads of State, in particular, President Kibaki and President Museveni, their officials and international observers, should be commended for the perseverance with which they have continued strenuous efforts to facilitate the Somali national reconciliation process. The Government of Kenya has borne a heavy

burden in hosting a large number of Somali delegates and representatives at the Conference for a protracted period. The international community, in particular the European Union, has continued to make generous financial contributions for the Conference. International observers, especially the African Union, the League of Arab States, and others have undertaken important and necessary targeted interventions in support of the mediation efforts of IGAD. Such generosity and involvement by the international community has to continue for the Somali reconciliation process to succeed.

61. At the same time, if the Somali leaders are to be encouraged to stay the course and to implement agreements they may reach in good faith, it will be necessary for the IGAD front-line States to narrow differences among themselves with regard to the Somali national reconciliation process, and to speak with one voice.

62. The mission of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) to the region in November 2003 and the adoption of resolution 1519 (2003) on 16 December 2003 demonstrate the Council's determination to give full effect to the implementation of the arms embargo on Somalia. By that resolution, the Council, inter alia, reiterated its serious concern over the continued flow of weapons and ammunition to and through Somalia. In accordance with the Council's request, I have established a Monitoring Group composed of four experts, for a period of six months, to be based in Nairobi. The Monitoring Group is mandated, inter alia, to investigate violations of the arms embargo covering access to Somalia by land, air and sea and to provide a draft list of those who continue to violate the arms embargo inside and outside Somalia, and their active supporters, for possible future measures by the Council.

63. Insecurity and violence in many parts of the country and more recently tensions over control of the Sool and Sanaag regions underline the fact that a comprehensive peace is both urgent and necessary in Somalia. Somali leaders and their militias should also be aware that they will be held accountable for continued violations of human rights.

64. Despite significant contributions to the 2003 consolidated appeal for Somalia, many essential services are not provided to the population because of lack of funds and the precarious security situation. During 2004, the United Nations intends to step up ongoing activities as well as the planning for peace-building initiatives. In addition to the serious humanitarian needs in all parts of Somalia, the drought in the Sool plateau is threatening to expand to other regions. Increased funding may be needed to ensure a timely and effective response.

65. The United Nations and non-governmental organizations have made greater efforts to improve the consolidated inter-agency appeal by making it more participatory; strengthening the analysis and subsequent planning; conducting both technical and senior level reviews of all projects; and prioritizing projects according to jointly developed criteria. This year, 16 non-governmental organizations participated in the process, 10 of them placing projects in the appeal alongside the United Nations. It is hoped that these efforts will lead to more cooperative, effective and strategic humanitarian engagement in 2004. To this end, I encourage donors to contribute generously to the consolidated appeal in order to ensure the fullest possible implementation of the Common Humanitarian Action Plan for Somalia.

66. In conclusion, I would like to commend my Representative for Somalia, Winston Tubman, his staff and those of the United Nations country team and the many non-governmental organizations for their efforts in support of peace and reconciliation in Somalia and for undertaking humanitarian and development activities under the difficult circumstances prevailing in the country.